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ABSTRACT

A study reviewed materials on the elderly as volunteers and volunteer work with the elderly from five databases: Sociological Abstracts, PsychInfo, Health Planning and Administration, ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), and the GPO (Government Printing Office) Monthly Catalog (government publications). Some of the findings of the study were as follows: (1) retirees are an important source of volunteers, especially now that volunteers are more acutely needed because of the increase in the numbers of frail elderly and reductions in funding for human service programs; (2) a large number of volunteer programs involve service from and to older adults, with a variety of motives for volunteering; (3) the majority of the programs involve expressive/community activities, health-related services, and school projects; (4) volunteerism is a positive experience both for the giver and the receiver; (5) some volunteer programs involving older adults have been unsuccessful; and (6) problems exist in recruiting and retaining volunteers, and barriers lead to underuse, particularly of potential elderly volunteers. Recommendations were to make greater use of elderly volunteers and to use volunteers to help frail elderly persons maintain their independence and quality of life. (88 references) (KC)

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Volunteerism and the Older Adult as Benefactor and Beneficiary: A Selective Review of the Literature

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PREFACE

This paper is the product of an extensive search of the literature on the subject of volunteerism involving older adults, using a combination of manual and computerized methods of information retrieval. Items were identified through on-line information retrieval in the Dialog System. The search covered the following data bases:

ERIC

GPO Monthly Catalog

Health Planning and Administration

Psyc information

Sociological abstracts

Some of the key words used in the search were: volunteer, voluntary, volunteer programs and services, aged, elderly, older adult, retiree, Gerontologic and Geriatric. The search listed 348 items. Copies of the annotated bibliography are available through the Strom Thurmond Institute on Volunteerism, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina. The computer search was funded by a grant from the Strom Thurmond Institute.

Note: The author acknowledges the assistance of Ibrahim Hanif, Life Science Reference Librarian Cooper Library, Clemson University for the computer search, Holley Ulbrich, Professor of Economics and Coordinator of the Volunteerism working group for editing this paper and Ms. Shirley Hyland, R.N., M.S.N., (candidate) for her dedicated and enthusiastic acquisition of numerous articles and books on volunteerism involving older adults. The author also wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Ms. Teresa Turbeville, Word Processor Operator, for typing the manuscript.

Volunteerism and the Older Adult as Benefactor and Beneficiary:
A Selected Review of Literature.

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Chapter I

Who Volunteers

Introduction:

Volunteerism is a distinctive attribute of Americans. In the recent past, volunteer activity was somewhat diminished due to the professionalism of human services; however, currently there is a resurgence of volunteerism due to economic factors. Social agencies have experienced the impact of inflation, governmental cutbacks, and increasingly limited resources, necessitating the development of volunteer programs to meet essential human needs (Monk & Cryns, 1974; Zischka & Jones, 1984).

Historically, older adults have been among the greatest contributors to volunteer programs, and are also primary recipients of these services. According to Perry (1983) older adults are well equipped to meet the need for volunteers. They are experienced in overcoming hardships, and have lived through economic depression. Volunteer programs utilize the talents, skills, and abilities of older adults developed over a lifetime. Their volunteer activities not only benefit society and fills gaps in human services, but also benefits the volunteer, providing fellowship, diversion, and self-satisfaction. Volunteerism

meets certain psychosocial needs of older adults, neutralizing loneliness, and providing feelings of self respect, usefulness, and the pleasure of being creative. Volunteering often offers a prestigious social role for retirees as many agencies incorporate volunteer positions and programs for older persons into their formal structure (Payne, 1977). According to Perry (1983), the challenge does not lie in finding older persons willing to volunteer, but rather in creating volunteer roles in which older persons can be utilized to their fullest potential, and identifying persons willing to accept volunteer assistance.

Although numerous writers describe volunteer programs involving older adults, there have been only limited efforts to examine the literature for trends and needs of retirees in relation to volunteerism. Because this age group is one of the largest and fastest growing in the population, it is important not only to examine what has been done in the past by older volunteers, but also to determine the future needs and potential contribution of this age group. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to review the literature concerning the role of volunteerism among older adults. This paper examines the following questions:

1) who among older adults volunteers, and why,
2) what type of volunteer programs have been supported and utilized by retirees,
3) what consequences and benefits have resulted from these volunteer activities,
4) what problems were encountered; and
5) what are the implications for the future?

This paper should be of interest to managers and directors of volunteer-using agencies that are attempting to recruit retirees as volunteers or to provide volunteer services to older adults. It should be helpful to corporations in preparing workers for retirement by encouraging volunteer service among older adults so that volunteer agencies will be more inclined to use the skills of their retirees as volunteers in organizations. The information in this paper should also be useful to students of the aging process, because volunteerism is an important aspect of the lives of older adults. Politicians and planners of social welfare programs, should become more aware of the potential impact of the older volunteer in alleviating some of the social ills in society. Finally, the information in this paper will serve to remind all age groups of the unselfish dedication of older persons who have contributed so much and who continue to be in great need of volunteer services.

Retirees Volunteer:

The population of healthy, well educated, self sufficient older persons is growing rapidly and constitutes a new human resource (Hickey, 1978). Of the 25 million adults over 65 years of age, only a small percentage (12 percent) were full-time paid employees in 1977 (Palmore, 1977). However, 25 percent were employed either full or part-time in 1982 (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1984). Statistics indicate that a male in this age group will live an additional 14 years, and a woman 18 years. Each successive cohort will be better able to contribute to volunteer organizations.

Paid work provides productive involvement that terminates with retirement. Volunteer work provides a similar sense of identity and participation in community life. Volunteering has become a highly desirable endeavor to be pursued by retired older Americans (Chambre & Lowe, 1983-84). Chambre & Lowe suggest that twenty years ago there was some skepticism and negative attitudes about the interest or willingness of older persons to serve as volunteers; only recently have organizations actively sought and encouraged older volunteers. Retirees provide organizations with untapped potential personnel resources.

Volunteerism has been defined as any unpaid work performed through an organization (Perry, 1983). Chambre (1984) agrees that volunteerism is the performance of work without pay, within the context of a formal organization or voluntary association. There has been some blurring of this definition in organizations that provide limited reimbursement in the form of stipends and mileage. With or without some type of reimbursement, volunteer service is greatly needed and actively pursued by many retirees.

The majority of the literature on volunteerism among older adults indicates that there is continuity in voluntary membership in associations in the later years; some suggest that there is increased participation during retirement (Babchuck, Peters, Hoyt, & Kaiser, 1979; Cutler, 1981-82; Cutler, 1977; Hickey, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1966). In a study of membership in associations among the aged, Babchuck, Peters, Hoyt & Kaiser interviewed 124 persons over 65 years of age. Their findings indicated that 79 percent were affiliated with a voluntary group and the majority (58%) belonged to more than one association. In

addition, membership in voluntary organizations continued among those 80 years of age and over. Attendance was highest for professional work related activities, with social projects and service work second and third respectively. Professional work-related activities included volunteer work by retired health care professionals. Those with multiple memberships were more active in volunteer activities.

In 1983, Perry studied community volunteer activities of 75 persons who were 60 years of age and over. The study indicated that about 25 percent of those over 65 years of age volunteer. Ebersole & Hess (1981) suggest a figure of 20 percent, with an additional ten percent expressing interest in it.

In contrast to these studies, Chambre (1984) found that older persons volunteered less often than persons in the general population. Chambre's research involved the secondary analysis of a 1974 Action survey that included 4,339 persons over the age of 60 years. In Chambre's sample 15.7 percent of those who were over 60 years of age volunteered, whereas one in four volunteered in other age groups.

Socioeconomic Factors

There are conflicting reports in the literature concerning the relationship between demographic factors and volunteerism among older adults (Babchuk, Peters, Hoyt, & Kaiser, 1979; Biegel, Shore, & Gordon, 1984; Culter, 1981-82; Hunter & Linn, 1980-81; Monk & Cryne, 1974; Trela, 1976; Perry, 1983). Both Hunter & Linn and Trela report that there is no difference between volunteer and non-volunteer groups for most demographic variables. In 1966, Rosenblatt found no difference between educational level and those who were not willing to volunteer.

In contrast, Culter's study indicates that voluntary membership and participation is a reflection of socioeconomic factors such as income and education. A 1974 study by Monk & Cryne of 180 individuals aged 60 and over reported that the following are predictors of voluntaristic involvement; youth, higher income, better health, and recreational interest. Some other factors that influenced voluntary activity included; information about services available, availability of spare time, belief in helping others, and organizational interest in senior activities.

Babchuk, Peters, Hoyt & Kaiser (1979) found that social class, as measured by an occupational prestige scale, indicated increased participation in volunteerism in those from upper social class backgrounds. Perry's 1983 findings agree with those of Babchuk, Peters, Hoyt & Kaiser indicating that non-volunteers had less income and education than volunteers. In Perry's sample, 59 percent of those interviewed expressed willingness to volunteer; these persons generally gave as a reason for not volunteering the fact that no one had asked them.

Age, Sex, and Ethnic Group:

The majority of the literature on older adult volunteers suggests that volunteer work has been primarily a woman's role, but finding vary on race and it is not clear on the ages at which older adults are more likely to volunteer (Chambre, 1984; Fengler, 1984; Goodman, 1984; Sequin, 1982).

In 1984, in a program in Milwaukee that utilized volunteers as legal guardians for the mentally incompetent elderly, a survey found that volunteers included 176 females and three males, a majority of

Caucasian (168) and 39 blacks, two Hispanics, and two American Indians ("Milwaukee's Volunteers", 1984). Sequin (1982) found that in a program using older volunteers at the Andrus Center in California, 84 percent of the 64 volunteers were women; 49 were white, 15 black and one Hispanic. (All were in a high socio-economic class). In 1984, Fengler investigated the life satisfaction of elderly volunteers who were employed or participating at a meal site program. Fengler (1984) found that 61 percent were female, and also noted that 39 percent were widowed, 53 percent were married, and 31 percent lived alone. The majority of the sample of 1400 over 65 years of age had less than a high school education; ten percent had a college degree, and twelve percent were employed.

Using a sample that consisted of 67 persons (average age 76 years) living in an age-segregated housing development, Goodman (1984) agrees that there is more helping among older women than older men. The majority were widowed (57%); 96 percent were Caucasian.

In contrast to Goodman and Fengler's findings, Babchuk, Peters, Hoyt & Kaiser (1979) found men and women were equally likely to belong to groups and to hold multiple memberships. However, men and women interviewed for this study belonged to different types of groups that could be explained in traditional terms. Women belonged to church and social groups while men belonged to work-related and service organizations. A similar study by Chambre (1984) found that male retirees volunteered about half as often (10.7%) as female retirees (18%), but employed elderly peresons volunteered at about the same rates, men (19.4%) and women (20.7%).

It is difficult to determine from the literature if more women volunteer because there are a greater number of older women, or if the women find the volunteer role more fulfilling than men. It is equally difficult to determine whether race is a factor influencing volunteerism among older adults. Both Goodman's (1984) and Fengler's (1984) sample consisted of a high percentage of white persons. Perry (1983) and Monk & Cryne (1974) found a high percentage of black men volunteer. In 1975, Clemente, Rexroad, & Hirsch, in a secondary analysis of data collected in 1967 in Philadelphia, concluded that blacks belonged to more associations than whites and had higher attendance rates. The sample included 753 blacks and 260 whites, who were 65 years of age and over. They suggest that their findings may reflect greater participation of aged blacks in church-related groups.

Summary

Retirees are an important source of volunteers in the United States. Volunteerism provides them with a highly desirable method of self-enhancement as well as community enrichment. The services of volunteers are more acutely needed now than in the past by frail elders and other vulnerable individuals due to reductions in funding for human service programs. Corporate organizations, human service agencies, and educational institutions have begun to realize the potential of retirees and the extent of services needed by older adults.

Chapter II

Volunteer Programs

Introduction:

The literature on volunteerism describes a variety of programs in which older adults are both the provider and recipient of services. This section will examine some volunteer services provided by older adults and volunteer programs that have been designed to benefit the elderly. In addition, motives or reasons for volunteering will also be examined.

The Older Adult as Provider:

There is general agreement in the literature that older adults can usually meet the needs of their peers better than any other age group (Dawson, 1981; Heller, Walsh, & Wilson, 1981; Herman, 1976; "Retirement village", 1981; "Senior Volunteers", 1981; Vinokur-Kaplan, Cibulski, Spero, & Bergman, 1982). They volunteer to assist other older adults in a variety of settings. In one retirement community a group of older adults set up a program that provided rides, meals on wheels, phone calls, grocery shopping, equipment loans, widow to widow service, counseling, hospital visitation, and job referral ("Retirement Village", 1981).

Dawson (1981) described the use of older widows as counselors for bereaved and widowed persons in a hospice program. Not only do older adults volunteer service to other older adults in hospice programs and hospitals, but they also volunteer to assist the elderly in nursing homes. In addition, nursing home residents serve as volunteers to other residents in roles such as greeters of new residents and on advisory councils (Friedman, 1975).

Home health care is widely acclaimed as an integral part of comprehensive service for the aged. However, there has been limited utilization of home health care services by the elderly due to restrictive criteria and eligibility rules (Heller, Walsh, & Wilson, 1981). According to Heller, Walsh & Wilson alternative strategies should be developed to meet this problem. They described a program in which seniors help seniors in providing home health care services. Brummel (1984) described the Senior Companion Program, initiated by the Federal Domestic Services Act of 1973, that provided a stipend to volunteers to provide peer support to frail elderly, to decrease isolation, and to maintain autonomy at home.

To assist older adults in their volunteer role, the federal government has sponsored several programs. The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) under the Federal ACTION Agency, offers people over 50 years of age the opportunity of doing volunteer service in the community. The program pays the volunteer for transportation costs to the place of service (Atchley, 1985). The Foster Grandparent Program is also funded by ACTION and provides older adults a means of caring for and loving children and teenagers in institutions. Volunteers receive a small hourly stipend for their services (Butler & Lewis, 1982). The Senior Companion Program is modeled after the Foster Grandparent Program and offers a small stipend to older people who help adults with special needs (Atchley, 1985).

Older adult volunteers provide service and support to their peers, but they also serve other age groups, particularly young children, in both formal and informal situations ("Action Volunteers", 1977; Alpert,

1975; Aucoin, 1984; Barbour, 1981; Hickey, 1978; McCord, 1983; "Nursing Home residents", 1981; Sequin, 1982). In one RSVP program, nursing home residents volunteer weekly to work in the community, most work with elementary school children ("Nursing Home residents", 1981). The school children in this program are taught Spanish, reading, tutoring, and intergenerational contact. Residents in nursing homes volunteered for jobs such as talking-book moderators, birthday party host and hostesses, resident councilors, escorts, and teachers.

Similar programs were described that took place in Hawaii, where Foster grandparents and Retired Senior Volunteers cared for and interacted with retarded children ("Action Volunteers", 1977). Both the volunteers and children benefited from the experience.

Only recently have universities begun to utilize retirees who are willing to volunteer their services on campuses (Arden, 1986; Haber, 1982; Pritchard & Tomb, 1981). The possibility of increasing volunteer participation by retirees on college campuses has only recently caught on and is being explored across the country.

Pritchard & Tomb conducted a research project to investigate the use of senior citizens on college campuses. The study consisted of a survey of 200 colleges, with 65 questionnaires returned. The results indicate that 32 percent had campus programs for retirees in service roles. Some of the service roles included lecturer, counselors, tutors, consultants, aid to dependent students, visitors to foreign students, library workers, hospitality hosts, and security guards. In a similar study, Haber (1982) evaluated volunteer programs for older adults sponsored by a university.

Persons were interviewed in Haber's study in three programs, Senior Companion, Health and Fitness, and Closing the Generation Gap Project. The first two programs were for older adults; the third program involved retirees assisting in elementary schools. The results suggest that satisfactory outcome were found with all three programs.

In addition to volunteer service to their peers and schools, older adults have been involved in some non-traditional volunteer programs. In 1978, Hickey described a program in which seven hospitals participated to utilize skilled retired older persons. Some non-traditional assignments included counseling, working in laboratories and libraries, serving as health educators, health screeners, pararesearchers, and volunteering to follow up and educate in posion control centers.

Babchuck, Peters, Hoyt, and Kaiser's (1979) research indicated that membership in voluntary organizations among the aged was limited in their study to expressive-instrumental, not youth, work, or politically oriented organizations. Oatman (1975) described several volunteer programs utilizing older adults to promote live local theater. Some non-profit organizations utilize older volunteers to promote art and educational opportunities for the elderly ("New York City", 1975).

Senior Citizens have become actively involved in preventing crime in neighborhoods and assisting police departments that may be understaffed (O'Neil, 1977; "Senior Volunteers", 1981). O'Neil suggests the following ways that retirees can assist police departments: do paper work to release uniformed personnel for street work, serve as court watcher over elected judges, identify older person's possessions, install security

locks for older adults, train newly appointed personnel, assist police to prepare cases, and notify victims of progress on the case.

The Older Adult as Beneficiary:

College students have traditionally served as volunteers for older adults both for credit and altruistic purposes (Arthur, Donnan & Lair, 1973; Euster, 1984-85; Firman, Gelfand & Ventura, 1983; Fretz, 1979; Maguire, 1979; Metz, 1980). Arthur, Donnan & Lair investigated the psychological response of nursing home residents to visits by undergraduate students. A significant improvement ($p < .02$) in morale was obtained in residents who received visits, compared to the control group ($p < .06$).

Euster described the roles of five graduate students in volunteer agencies involving older adults. The students taught classes, wrote a grant, presented an art program at a meal site, and increased agency awareness of potential contribution of volunteers.

In a similar program Firman, Gelfand & Ventura examined the outcome and limitation of service learning by students working with older persons. The program involved 2305 college age students over a 30 month period. The services provided were primarily social/recreational (82 percent), personal care (2 percent), household tasks (3.4 percent), legal (2.6 percent) and educational (2.3 percent).

Fretz's (1979) research examined differences between college students who completed a volunteer program for older adults and those who dropped out. The results did not indicate any difference in demographic or psychological variables.

Student nurses have also learned and shared through volunteer programs to assist older adults. In 1980, Metz described a program to support inner city elderly sponsored by the Senior Advisory Council, HUD, and a city police department in which student nurses assisted as a part of their clinical experiences.

Maguire (1979) described a program in which college students volunteered through a church to serve elderly persons living in the community. Volunteers were obtained from the church to continue the program when students were on vacation from college.

Volunteerism in nursing homes has been implemented in many institutions throughout the country using both older adults and persons from other age groups as volunteers. Litwin, Kaye & Monk (1983) conducted two research projects that investigated the services of volunteer ombudsmen. The purpose of the ombudsman program was to make nursing homes a part of the community and to review resident complaints and grievances. The findings question whether volunteer ombudsmen are adequately equipped or empowered to act as patient representatives in nursing homes as mediators and advocates.

An investigation was conducted by Zepelin & Stutzman (1978) of the type of services provided by volunteers in nursing homes. The study utilized six interviews with activity directors and mailed questionnaires to 275 nursing homes. The results indicated that the lowest rates of volunteerism were to nursing homes located in the inner city and the highest were to nursing homes located in suburban areas. The most successful activities involved interaction with the residents and the

least successful included feeding and housekeeping duties. Activity success was based on the satisfaction expressed by the volunteers performing the task.

Bulwin (1978) and Scott (1980-81) described community based volunteer programs in nursing homes. Bulwin reported on a chaplaincy program for residents; Scott looked at volunteers providing informal support in long-term facilities. Waldruff, McLaughlin, & Harris (1984) describe a more formal volunteer program, in which the Salvation Army established a branch of its organization in one institution.

Hospitals have utilized volunteers of all ages to supplement programs, relieve paid staff, and humanize the hospital atmosphere for years with a current upsurge in this activity (Beckam, 1985; Minor & Thompson, 1975; Warner, Brier, & Cohen, 1980). In a hospital-based volunteer program to help patients meet their needs the following services were offered: obtained services and entitlements, maintained patients home, provided socialization, and escorted to specific areas. Warner, Brier, & Cohen found that the volunteers in their study felt that the program was demanding and time consuming.

In addition to the need for volunteers in institutions and hospice programs, the need is also urgent for assistance to frail, isolated elders in their homes (Brummel, 1984; Hickey, 1978; "Volunteers", 1968; Warner, Brier, & Cohen, 1980; Young, Larson, & Goughler, 1983). Young, Larsen & Goughler suggest the need for the following home health services; escort to health care professionals, providing telephone assurance, case-finding, house and yard maintenance, and transport to recreational events.

Barbour (1981) describes a program in Australia designed to supplement existing social programs by one-on-one visiting of isolated elders. Vinokur-Kaplan, Cibulski, Spero, & Bergman (1982) conducted a survey in Israel to determine whether a program of friendly visiting and aid by older visitors to other older person was succeeding in providing social support, decreasing isolation, and loneliness. The survey of 94 frail elders determined that the visitors provided conversation, advice, shopping, but little housework or nursing tasks. The majority of the participants surveyed wanted to continue the program.

In some communities, older adults have received legal assistance from attorneys and paralegal workers. In Milwaukee (1984), volunteers were recruited to serve as legal guardians for mentally incompetent persons (often elderly) who had no one to do this for them. The program required extensive investigation and training of the volunteers. The volunteer made important decisions for the incompetent person, such as transferral from one long term care facility to another, withdrawing money, authorizing surgery, and giving permission for marriage. In a similar program in Georgia, attorneys were recruited to volunteer their services for older adults through a Council on Aging. The initial consultation was free; fees for subsequent services were negotiated with the client. Not only did this program provide older adults access to members of the legal profession, of whom they tend to be somewhat suspicious; it also provided attorneys with some experience and knowledge of potential older clients ("What a Paralegal", 1984).

Motivations for Volunteering:

There are a variety of reasons for volunteering given in the literature. In the previously described Milwaukee (1984) report that utilized volunteers as legal guardians for mentally incompetent elders, some reason for volunteering included: strong feelings about the nursing home industry, a duty to serve, the desire for social or personal experiences, and religious motivations.

In 1977, Peyser found that among those who volunteered to work in a nursing home were retirees, housewives with extra time, teenagers seeking career choice, and students. Warner (1981) described a volunteer service for inner city elderly after discharge from the hospital. Among the 29 volunteers, all were female and the majority were between 21-40 years of age. Most of the volunteers in the program described by Warner were college educated while others were nurses seeking to obtain requirements for an advanced degree.

Larkin (1985) examined programs involving volunteers from corporate organizations. For this group, motives for volunteering included the desire to do something for the community, encouragement from corporate executives, increased morale, and "it makes a person feel good".

Summary

These are a large number of volunteer programs that involve service from and to older adults, with a variety of motives for volunteering. The majority of the programs involve expressive/community activities, health related services, and school projects. Universities have been slow in utilizing retirees as volunteers.

Chapter III

Benefits and Consequences

Introduction:

There are individual and societal benefits that result from volunteerism involving older adults. One of the benefits for society is the positive economic impact on social service programs faced with diminishing resources and governmental cutbacks. Individuals benefit both in services received and in the opportunity to provide services to others. This section examines the literature on the consequences and benefits of volunteering by or to older adults both for society and the individual. The literature is grouped by categories of consequences and benefits; personal and societal.

Personal:

The majority of the literature indicates that there is an increase in life satisfaction for the older adult volunteer (Bond, 1982; Cutler, 1973; Fengler, 1984; Goodman, 1984; Hunter & Linn, 1980-81; Payne, 1977). The purpose of Payne's study was to develop a theoretical model of social role reconstructing. Payne suggests that the volunteer role serves as an intervention strategy with older adults and that it may provide role continuity, satisfaction, enhancement of the self-concept, and increased social support.

Hunter & Linn's (1980-81) research studying satisfaction in older adults, showed that life satisfaction increased with volunteerism. Other positive changes included: a stronger will to live, fewer symptoms of depression, anxiety, and somatization. Some additional benefits for older persons who volunteered in the study were a buffer for losses,

alternatives during retirement, social approval, and increased feelings of self-respect. For participants in this study volunteering obtained satisfaction of communication needs, filled unused time, neutralized the effects of loneliness, and created a functional-status bearing role. (Their sample included 53 volunteers in a VA Hospital compared to 49 non-volunteers; the Life Satisfaction Index A (LSIA) was utilized as a measure.)

In Fengler's (1984) study, the strongest predictor of life satisfaction was the volunteer role. However, Fengler suggests that living with others, experiencing good health, and education are more significant for well-being, than having a job, volunteering, or participating in a meal site, but when other resources deteroriate, these activities take on greater significance and can serve as buffers or replacement resources.

Bond (1982) also finds that persons donating time and service through volunteer activities were more satisfied than non-volunteers. The research by Bond utilized the LSIA with a sample of 373 persons between the ages of 55 and 74 years of age.

Goodman's (1984) research involved 67 elderly persons (average age: 76) living in age-segregated housing. The sample was divided into three groups; high helpers, mutual helpers, and isolates. Goodman found that high helpers were more outgoing and social then isolates.

Culter's (1973) study examined the changes associated with participation in voluntary organizations. The findings were similar to those of Goodman, indicating that voluntary participation increased life satisfaction, reduced isolation, fostered social interaction and met socioemotional needs of members.

In contrast to these four studies, research by Bull & Aucoin (1975) Cutler (1981-82) and Kornblum (1981) did not find a relation between voluntary participation and increased life satisfaction. Bull & Aucoin's data, based on a sample of 97 older persons living in the community, indicated that health and social status are the greatest predictors of life satisfaction. Cutler (1981-82) also found that membership of older adults in voluntary organizations tends to influence satisfaction with organizations. According to Cutler, organizational satisfaction influences satisfaction with life as a whole, therefore volunteer membership in organizations has only an indirect relation to life satisfaction.

The study by Kornblum (1981) found that participation in the volunteer role had no impact on older volunteers, except in self-perception and self assessed health, factors that were attributed to self-selection rather than program participation. The sample consisted of 198 aged persons who served in the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Kornblum's study questions expectations of increased life satisfaction and self-concept improvement, through an activity approach to improving relationships.

Despite the conflicting reports concerning the value of volunteering for the older adults, the majority of the literature suggest more positive than negative consequences (Crawford, 1976; Rosenblatt, 1966; Sequin & O'Brien, 1976). Some additional benefits that can be gained for older adults through volunteer association include political power, new skills, information, product discounts, legal assistance, crime control, environmental protection, self-confidence, self worth, social

interaction, better transportation, and access to the arts and humanities. (Aucoin, 1984; "New York City", 1975; Oatman, 1975; O'Neil, 1977; "Retirement Village", 1981; "Volunteers aid", 1968; "What a Paralegal", 1984). Crawford's (1976) study indicated that significant positive change resulted in RSVP volunteers in areas of confidence, sociability, and relationship needs. Similarily, Sequin & O'Brien (1976) found that participation in a volunteer program, improved the value of their lives and they experienced increased psychological growth. Rosenblatt (1966) suggested that in addition to increasing self image, society also benefits from older volunteers in closing the gap between service needed and being able to provide the service.

Both Babchuk, Peters, Hoyt & Kaiser (1979) and Chambre (1984) believe that volunteerism among the aging increases their political activity. Babchuk, Peters, Hoyt & Kaiser suggest that in addition to improving their self image, older adult volunteers feel less powerless and alienated, more involved in political functions, and conduct themselves differently than those who remain unaffiliated. Chambre agrees that volunteering can provide opportunities for altruistic behavior, new skills and political influence. However, Chambre's results, in contrast to previous findings, indicate that volunteerism does not serve as a way of dealing with role loss in old age.

In an article describing a program to provide volunteer legal assistance to the aged, it was suggested that older persons are wary of legal fees and entanglements but frequently require legal services. Lawyers who volunteer their services for older adults gain self-satisfaction in helping resolve problems encountered by the elderly, broaden

their legal experience, and gain recognition for community services. Cases usually involve entitlement such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Veterans benefits, Medicare Medicaid, food stamp applications and other problems ("What a paralegal", 1984).

According to Oatman (1975), older adults who volunteer for live theater find personal excitement in being a part of the theater. They also enjoy doing something that matters and contribute to an art form that they value. For the theater, these volunteers can save thousands of dollars and time that would have been used for salaries. According to Oatman, volunteers are better at getting people to attend theater than are professional actors, and they are also better at fund raising. Older citizens also enjoy participating in artistic programs. In a program in NYC that provides art and theater for the elderly, they participate in photography, workshops, sculpture, concerts, plays, art exhibitions, jazz, and opera.

In 1984, Aucoin reported on the benefits to elders and society when volunteers serve to protect the environment and endangered species, such as birds, victims of oil spills, and other environmental hazards. Aucoin identifies environmental organizations across the United States dedicated to preserving the environment in which the elderly can participate.

Societal:

Volunteer service in nursing homes has been one of the most important and frequent settings for contributions from both older adults and other age groups. Herman (1976) Holmes & Everline (1984) and Reitz & Hawkins (1983) describe the benefits of volunteers serving in nursing

homes. Holmes & Everline (1984) suggest that volunteers who serve as remotivators are more effective than staff because they are there on a voluntary basis. Older volunteers can also relate more effectively to other older adults because of shared life experience.

Increased resident participation in activities was a result of a volunteer project described by Reitz & Hawkins (1983). The project involved two volunteers who assisted in providing recreational activities for eight severely disabled nursing home residents.

Older adult residents in nursing homes have also served as volunteers, benefiting both themselves and the people served (Friedman, 1975; "Nursing home", 1981; Waldruff, McLaughlin & Harris, 1984). Residents in one nursing home joined RSVP to work in the community to enhance intergenerational relations primarily with elementary school age children ("Nursing home", 1981). In other nursing homes, residents serve as volunteers on councils and welcoming committees to assist new residents. In some nursing homes older adults participate in fund raising activities for the home, making food for bake sales, crafts and their items to sell. According to Friedman, nursing home residents who volunteer gain from the group process.

Successful programs have been established utilizing volunteers as ombudsmen for nursing home residents (Netting & Hinds, 1984; Zischka & Jones, 1984). The presence of ombudsmen ensures compliance with the patient's Bill of Rights, with the ombudsmen becoming the advocate and counselors for the residents. In another nursing home volunteers visited nursing homes to inspect them; and also prepared a booklet on "How to Choose a Nursing Home" (Agress, 1979). Agress believed that it

demonstrated the concern of community and increased awareness by the community of the needs of residents.

Volunteers have also been used extensively to facilitate transition of older adults from health care institutions, to enhance services, and to prevent institutionalization (Adelson, Kaminsky & Cohen, 1979; Al-Khazraji, Cohen, Eyerest & Stratton, 1974; Beckam, 1985; Dawson, 1981; Heller, Walsh & Wilson, 1981; Hickey, 1978; Key, 1982; Maguire, 1979; Minor & Thompson, 1975; Quinteros, Williams,, White & Pickering, 1984; Warner, 1981; Young, Larson & Goughler, 1983). In the program described by Adelson, Kaminsky & Cohen, in which "friendly visitors" were available to ease the transition of patients from a hospital to nursing homes, no one refused the service.

According to Key (1982), volunteers who visit elderly isolated persons can make them aware of resources available in the community. Minor & Thompson (1975) and Hickey (1978) suggest some benefits to volunteers in health care settings are satisfaction in challenging assignments, personal fulfillment, and the knowledge that they have met many needs of the persons served. Young, Larson & Goughler (1983) suggest that volunteers make community leaders aware of needs and it helps institutions identify community doers. Quinteros, William, White & Pickering (1984) indicate that some programs involving volunteers (they cite a special speach therapy program) providing health related services to the elderly may not appear to be cost effective on a narrowly defined measure, but clients will make greater progress and experience higher satisfaction.

Another health related program that has successfully utilized older adults in service to others is the Hospice movement. Dawson (1981) indicates that benefits to persons who are terminally ill and visited by older adults include improved appearance, increased social interaction, more energy, optimism, and improved self esteem. The older volunteers in turn experienced new knowledge about the community, mental stimulation, constructive mental health and intergenerational interaction.

There has been limited exposure of health care professionals to older adults in their usual setting, the community, outside of institutions; however, Metz (1980) reports a successful program involving student nurses who worked with inner city elderly. Benefits to the students included an opportunity to promote wellness, utilize creative interventions, and acquire a body of knowledge about the problems of non-institutionalized elderly.

In 1974, Weinsberg conducted a research study to examine the attitudes of young high school volunteers toward the elderly. The sample included 268 volunteers and 247 non-volunteers, with 108 volunteers in the follow up test. Fifty-six percent of the volunteers selected health related careers compared to 18 percent in the control group who did not volunteer.

The majority of the literature supports the idea that intergenerational contact is healthy, positive, and productive ("Action Volunteers", 1977; Alpert, 1975; Barbour, 1981). Baggett's (1981) research, however, indicated that interaction between the elderly volunteers and public school children may not change children's negative attitudes toward the elderly. Baggett's study involved attitude tests of 28 children five

through nine years of age who had approximately 20 hours of contact with an elderly person. In contrast, Alpert (1975) described a successful program in which older persons supplemented full-time teachers. The older adult volunteers were recognized as skilled and effective tutors, beloved by elementary school children.

Barbour (1981) described a successful program between "Grannies" and children in Australia, in which older women provided support for children and parents. According to "Action Volunteers", Foster Grandparents, benefit both volunteers in improved physical appearance and the retarded children they served who are more receptive to learning and more aware of people after the foster grandparent visits.

Both high-school and college age students received benefits from providing volunteer service to older adults as well as benefits to their clientele (Firman, Gelfand and Ventura, 1983; Weinsberg (1974). Some benefits were increased intergenerational exchange, new creative ideas from students, and extra service at low cost. In the research by Weinsberg, the results indicated that attitudes toward the elderly were favorably modified in the experimental student group compared to the control group who did not volunteer.

Benefits to retirees who volunteered in a program at the Andrus Center included pre-retirement planning, health screening, nutrition, and other educational programs (Sequin, 1982). Older volunteers also become involved in research, recruiting subjects and conducting library searches. The Andrus Volunteer project undertaken at the Andrus

Gerontology Center at the University of Southern California, described by Sequin, is a classic example of the potential societal benefits that older adults can provide.

For years hospitals have augmented their staff with volunteers from the community. Universities, however, have been less imaginative in the use of volunteers to solve staffing problems. Arden (1986) suggests that having a volunteer program involving older adults in universities would add to the university's effectiveness without threatening traditional paid jobs on campus. Some suggested areas which retirees could serve as volunteers include the following: serving as a departmental receptionist to greet "walk-ins", answering general department calls, putting mail in faculty boxes, directing people to offices, responding to questions about exams, and taking messages for professors in class that need responsible attention. Retired teachers can be used to tutor, and other volunteers could be used to work in laboratories, fund raising, public relations, and recruiting.

Pritchard & Tomb (1981) agree that college campuses could benefit from a volunteer program. Some benefits they suggest include increasing the number of life-long learners, facilitating organizational operations, aiding intergenerational communication, providing retirees useful roles, decreasing ageism, providing useful services, enhancing quality of life, and saving money.

Summary

The majority of the literature supports the assumptions that volunteerism is a positive experience both for the giver and receiver. Psychosocial, health and educational rewards have been reported as a result of volunteer programs involving older adults.

Chapter IV

Problems

Introduction:

Despite the reported success of many volunteer programs, the literature also suggests that problems have been encountered. There are numerous articles that describe the needs of the elderly and the limited resources to meet these concerns (Adelson, Kaminsky & Cohen, 1979; Brummel, 1984; O'Neil, 1977; Young, Larson & Goughler, 1983). According to Adelson, Kaminsky and Cohen "Community supports for senior citizens are tremendously lacking" (p.198). They need volunteer help. In a program to prevent institutionalization and assist the frail elderly in their homes, Young, Larson & Gougler identified several concerns. There is an increased number of elderly needing community support, there is decreased funding available, and this large and needy group is nearly invisible in the community. These problems will be examined in the following categories; limited effect, recruitment difficulties, volunteers dropping out of programs, and organizational barriers.

Limited effect:

There are several articles in the literature on volunteerism involving older adults that describe a lack of or limited results from volunteer programs (Granger & Sherwood, 1983; McCord, 1981 & 1983; "Milwaukee's Volunteer", 1984; Watson, Fulton, Gurel, 1975). A study by Granger & Sherwood evaluated the rehospitalization rate, service use, and psychosocial adjustment of patients who were discharged from a rehabilitation center. The sample consisted of three groups of 142 persons who

were visited respectively, by volunteers, friendly visitors, registered nurses, and no designated visitors (a control group). The results indicate no significant differences among the groups, in rehospitalization, mortality rate, or psychosocial outcomes. These results suggest, according to the researchers, that existing informal supports and regular use of medical services are sufficient to monitor rehabilitation progress without the use of volunteer visitors from the rehabilitation center.

A similar study by Watson, Fulton & Gurel (1975) examined the effectiveness of a volunteer program in a VA hospital with volunteers helping mental patients reintegrate into the community. The sample consisted of 78 volunteers, 89 patients and 82 persons in the control group. The volunteers contacted the patients to give advice, offer companionship, and to provide transportation. According to the researchers, the consistency of the results or benefits were minor with little overall therapeutic effect. The researchers raise the following questions about the role of the volunteer,

1. Are they in contact with patients long enough to have a therapeutic effect?
2. Is there too little professional supervision in a task professionals have failed in for the most part?
3. Are volunteer-patient relations contrived and artificial? and
4. Do voluntary services simply provide an outlet for social services needs of community residents without providing a service useful to the patient? (p. 151).

McCord (1981 & 1983) examined the effectiveness of the Foster Grandparents program. The 1983 study consisted of 40 Grandparents in a large institutional setting with over 100 disabled children. The data analyses indicated that some grandparents encountered the following problems in their work with children;

1) resentment from staff, threatened staff authority, especially those who violated rules such as physical punishment of children;
2) boring jobs, such as feeding, walking, and transporting children,
3) a perceived generation gap with staff, and difficulty fitting in the organization. Volunteers were told to not to "make waves" but to make themselves useful.

The 1981 study concludes that pre-defined roles and goals for foster grandparents may be irrelevant and misleading when developed outside the work setting. The findings indicate that grandparents in this Foster Grandparents program lack two fundamental characteristics of volunteerism, that of freely choosing their duties and of participating without a profit motive. McCord (1981) suggests that such governmental programs for elderly may offer a piecemeal approach to systematic problems.

When volunteer legal assistance was provided to older adults the following problem was encountered: "Since this is an involuntary guardianship, the resident does not have a choice as to who the guardian will be or what responsibilities the guardian will perform. This is deter-

mined by the court" ("Milwaukee Volunteer", 1984 p.26). According to this article, the person who is declared legally incompetent loses his or her civil rights.

Recruitment Difficulties:

Maguire (1979) and Metz (1980) both described problems recruiting volunteers either among or to work with older adults. Metz suggests that it is difficult to find volunteers for Senior Escort Service in the inner city because many were afraid to venture out on the streets. The program described by Metz utilized Senior Student Nurses as a alternative. According to Maguire a recurrent problem for any volunteer organization is a constant supply of manpower. It was remedied in the program described by Maguire utilizing college students and by maintaining a pool of student volunteer replacements serving only those elderly with greatest need, during vacations from the University.

Dropouts:

Coupled with the difficulty of recruiting qualified, effective volunteers is the concern over retention and commitment in volunteer programs. Heller, Walsh and Wilson (1981) described a program to provide home health care to older adults by their peers. The following problems resulted either in persons dropping out or not continuing participation; transportation, not wanting to be tied down, and conflicting family responsibilities. In a similar report, Warner, Brier and Cohen (1980) describe a hospital volunteer program to help hospital patients meet needs. According to the authors, volunteers quickly lose interest if there is not sufficient work. There is need for special efforts to match abilities and strength to needs of older persons, and they need

institutional and community funding and support in order to maintain effective volunteer programs.

Additional reasons given by Zirchka and Jones (1984) for volunteers quiting a volunteer ombudsman program to long term care facilities included; a decreased commitment over time, demands on volunteers time, lessened physical strength, and economic conditions necessitating a return of the volunteer to gainful employment.

Organizational Barriers:

As some colleges and universities begin to utilize retired volunteers to supplement their resources, potential barriers should be examined. Ageism, transportation, lack of awareness of potential resources of retirees by administration, lack of time, fear of academia, lack of space, funding, parking, structural barriers, and lack of staff to develop programs are some of the barriers to creating a viable volunteer program on university campuses (Pritchard & Tomb 1981). Some potential problems mentioned by Firman, Gelfand & Ventura (1983) that could hamper the effects of a retired volunteer program on college campuses include difficulty marketing the program, financial constraints, student schedules, and interpersonal problems.

Brummel (1984) suggests that an untapped human resource to meet vital human needs of older people are other older people. According to Brummel, those who are senior adults are most aware of the needs of elders. However, some paid employees dislike the idea of having volunteer retirees supplement their programs and resist this effort. O'Neil (1977) indicates that some lawmen, for example, resent having persons who

are untrained work specifically in police work in departments, because they think these volunteers cannot understand the problems. "Clannishness" that exists in most police departments is a barrier to better utilization of retired volunteers.

Summary

There is evidence in the literature that indicates some volunteer programs involving older adults have been unsuccessful or limited in their effect. Problems also exist in recruiting and retaining volunteers. Barriers lead to underutilization, particularily of potentially elderly volunteers.

Chapter V

Implications

Introduction:

The literature on Volunteerism involving older adults provides program managers and directors of volunteers some guidelines that should facilitate the utilization of seniors in the volunteer role. These guidelines are also applicable to other age groups who serve older adults. The following guidelines are organized to include recruitment/orientation and implementation/retention of volunteers.

Recruitment/Orientation:

The majority of the articles indicate that successful programs should assign a specific staff person to coordinate the volunteer activities, provide an intensive orientation, use volunteers in personally rewarding ways, offer continued in-service training, and have a system to recognize volunteers (Alpert, 1975; Ebersole & Hess, 1981; Goodman, 1984; Holmes & Everline, 1984; MacLeod, 1980; "Milwaukee's Volunteer", 1984; Minor & Thompson, 1975; Netting & Hinds, 1984; Oatman, 1975; Sequin, 1982). According to Alpert, who described a program of older adults working with children, a successful program requires that the volunteer be available on a regular basis, take pre-service training, and "Like kids". Holmes & Everline agree that a successful program of volunteering in a nursing home requires at least a one year commitment. Oatman also believes in the need for a specific time commitment from potential volunteers.

Ebersole & Hess suggest that volunteers should be compensated for work, as they are in the Foster Grandparent Program that offers a minimum

wage and transportation costs. In the Milwaukee program that utilized volunteers as legal guardian for mentally incompetent elders, volunteers were more willing when they received a stipend so that less strain was placed on their budgets.

Goodman (1984) described a "Helper Bank" listing potential volunteers and services that could be provided. The author indicated that the more diverse the volunteer activities the greater the potential for involvement. MacLeod states that the agency must have written job descriptions indicating what the volunteer can expect, the title of the person to whom the volunteer is responsible, scheduling, and whether standing is involved. Attention to these factors gives the volunteer the luxury of choice. The job must be seen as useful; flexible; giving training, supervision, recognition, and evaluation.

According to Netting & Hinds (1984), volunteer ombudsman in programs to nursing homes residents need to have community acceptance and agency cooperation in order to be successful. According to Sequin (1982), there must be stimulating relationships, real work, accepting atmosphere, and positive identification with the organization in order to attract older volunteers.

Kay's (1984) research indicates that selection of volunteers in the community by peers had an impact on and was a prediction of performance in the program. In 1966, Rosenblatt found that it was necessary to match volunteers to job. The research indicated that even with matching, most of the volunteers in the study were unprepared to do the work without training. Peyser (1977) suggests that volunteers to nursing homes also need to know the home's philosophy, rules, regulations, and the normal

aging process. The author continues that volunteers need classes and communication with supervisors. They also need to be made to feel needed and to be recognized.

Intervention/Retention:

In addition to the previously mentioned guidelines for the successful implementation of volunteer programs involving older adults, several authors have indicated specific methods to maintain and evaluate programs (Al-Khazraji, Cohen, Everest & Stratton, 1974; Culter, 1977; Friedman, 1975; Herman, 1976; "Milwaukee volunteers", 1984; "Nursing home", 1981; Sequin & O'Brien, 1976).

In a New York City program in which nursing home residents volunteered their services in the community through an RSVP program, a yearly workshop was held to iron out problems, and to serve as a springboard for the programs expansion. Similarily, Herman suggests weekly meetings between volunteers and staff for a successful visiting program with nursing home residents. Both Al Khazraji, Cohen, Everest & Stratton and the Milwaukee project indicated the importance of close supervision of volunteers by agency staff and of a director with high standards and high expectations of volunteer's standards.

Friedman indicates that flexibility is needed to retain volunteers, who prefer to visit institutionalized elderly when and where and as long as necessary, not at a scheduled time. Sequin suggests that the work environment must be such that the volunteer is valued and feels comfortable, is recognized for achievement, has interesting work, and grows as a person.

A study by Culter (1977) called for research to determine what factors are related to individual changes in participation levels among volunteers. Continued evaluation of programs is necessary to initiate changes and improve service.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been compiled from suggestions obtained in the literature review and are intended to assist managers and directors of volunteer organization to develop successful programs involving older adults:

1. Conduct research to determine the effectiveness of volunteer programs in meeting human service needs and determine if some volunteer programs have been unsuccessful because of vested interest, fear of change, or employee's fear of losing jobs to volunteers.
2. Pay retired volunteers for services if they are living on a limited or fixed income and need to be reimbursed.
3. Utilize older adults volunteers on college campuses in roles similar to those they fulfill in hospitals and nursing homes to promote life-long learning, intergenerational interaction, and cost containment.
4. Provide orientation, supervision, in-service education, evaluation and recognition for volunteers.
5. Be aware of transportation needs, parking problems and health limitations of retirees.
6. Have written job descriptions for volunteers.
7. Provide a variety of interesting, stimulating, and rewarding work, not repetitive and boring tasks.

8. Be flexible; allow times and schedules of volunteers to vary.
9. Provide for safety of the volunteers and person being served.
10. Utilize volunteers only in supplemental roles, not as replacement for paid employees.
11. Let potential volunteers know the agency's philosophy, rules, and regulations.
12. Educate agency personnel and volunteers about the aging process to prevent ageism.
13. Encourage retirees to volunteer, to utilize an untapped human resource.
14. Reduce isolation, decrease institutionalization, improve health of frail elders through volunteer support of social service agencies.
15. Prevent ageism by involving older adults in worthwhile community projects.

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